



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Vision: We will build a stronger Louisiana by helping individuals, children and families to achieve safer and more independent lives.

Mission: Effectively and efficiently guiding individuals, children and families toward independence and safety through integrated quality services and partnerships in an environment of opportunity and accountability.

The Office of the Secretary will coordinate department efforts by providing leadership, information, support and oversight to all DSS agencies. OSS will promote efficient, professional and timely responses to employees, partners, and customers.

The Office of Community Services will strengthen the safety, permanency and well being of our state's children and families by providing child abuse prevention services, child welfare services, community based services, and administrative and executive supports.

The Office of Family Support will provide supportive services that assist residents to move toward independence and self-sufficiency by meeting basic needs through the provision of financial assistance, education and training, Food Stamps, Child Care, Child Support Enforcement, and the determination of eligibility for Disability Benefits.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services will assist persons with disabilities in their desire to obtain or maintain employment and/or to achieve independence in their communities by providing rehabilitation services and working cooperatively with business and other community resources.

Philosophy: **The Department of Social Services is committed to recognition and respect of basic human needs and civil rights of both consumers and employees and the holistic delivery of services with integrity, honesty and fairness.**

DSS Goals:

- I. We will build a unified DSS that pools human and financial resources in order to better serve consumers.**
- II. We will provide quality service to consumers.**
- III. We will utilize evidence-based practices and strategic approaches to fulfill the DSS Mission.**
- IV. We will maximize resources by operating the department in an efficient and effective manner.**

Office of Community Services (OCS)

Agency Number: 10-370

Program Authorizations: (Refer to Appendix A)

The Office of Community Services provides for the public child welfare functions of the state, including but not limited to child protective services; making permanent plans for foster children and meeting their daily maintenance needs of food, shelter, clothing, necessary physical medical services, school supplies, and incidental personal needs; and adoption placement services for foster children freed for adoption. It also administers the federal grants for other programs as assigned by the Secretary.

A. CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

The Child Abuse Prevention program seeks legislative authority and appropriation for the development of programs designed to prevent child abuse and neglect. Through community based prevention efforts the aim is to reduce the incidents of abuse and neglect throughout the state.

- GOAL: We will utilize innovative evidence-based strategic approaches to fulfill the Department of Social Services (DSS) mission. (DSS Goal III)
- Objective A.1: To obtain legislative authority and appropriation to expand DSS/OCS statutory mission statement to include child abuse and neglect prevention services by FY 2007.
- Strategy A.1.1: Develop legislative proposal to include prevention services.
- Strategy A.1.2: Develop and provide statewide cost benefit analysis to support proposal.
- Strategy A.1.3: Continue to work with juvenile justice reform initiatives to insure statewide strategy.

Performance Indicators:

- Input: Baseline resource allocation (budget and staff)
- Outcome: Number of clients served in prevention program

- OBJECTIVE A.2: To develop and implement at least one primary prevention program by 2007 and evaluate by 2010.
- Strategy A.2.1: Increase primary prevention through educational programs and public awareness.
- Strategy A.2.2: Identify additional funding resources for prevention programs.
- Strategy A.2.3: Focus limited resources on evidence-based practices for primary prevention.

Performance Indicators:

- Input: Baseline resource allocation (budget and staff)
- Outcome: Number of clients served in prevention program

B. CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

The Child Welfare Services program functions to: ensure the safety of children protecting them from caretaker abuse; improve permanency and placement stability for foster children; and ensure permanency for children in state custody through timely placements in permanent homes.

GOAL: We will provide quality service to customers. (DSS Goal II)

OBJECTIVE B.1: To increase by 25% the number of placement resources that meet the needs of foster children to improve permanency and placement stability by June 30, 2010.

Strategy B.1.1: Increase board rate of foster homes to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) medium income standard for the Urban South.

Strategy B.1.2: Develop a needs profile of children in foster care.

Strategy B.1.3: Increase residential pay rate for placement.

Strategy B.1.4: Secure funding for residential placement that meets the needs of our children.

Strategy B.1.5: Engage Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) DHH/Medicaid in developing placement resources to meet the needs of our children.

Strategy B.1.6: Develop statewide recruitment program for foster homes.

Performance Indicators:

Input: Average daily payment of 24-hour foster care board payments

Input: Number of adoptive placements at June 30

Output: Number of children receiving foster care services per year (cumulative)

Efficiency: Percentage of USDA average cost for Urban South which is paid as family foster care board in Louisiana

Efficiency: Average cost of foster care per child

Outcome: Percentage of children in care less than 12 months with no more than 2 placements

Outcome: Percentage of the foster care population on June 30 who had one placement

Outcome: Percentage of the foster care population on June 30 who had two-three original placements

Outcome: Percentage of the foster care population on June 30 who had four or more placements

OBJECTIVE B.2: To increase the number, type, and geographical distribution of services that meet the permanency and well being needs of children who are served by the agency by 10% by end of FY 2010.

Strategy B.2.1: Develop a needs profile of families being served.
Strategy B.2.2: Implement statewide intensive home based services (IHBS).
Strategy B.2.3: Increase adoption subsidy to 100% of board rate.
Strategy B.2.4: Implement post adoption/adoption preservation services.
Strategy B.2.5: Expand services statewide based on promising Child Welfare best practices.
Strategy B.2.6: Implement discharge planning and aftercare for children and families.
Strategy B.2.7: Collaborate with local school systems to coordinate services to children being served by the agency.
Strategy B.2.8: Explore using A Comprehensive Enterprise Social Services System (ACCESS) technology to provide data analysis to better identify targeted geographical locations of children and service providers for children's services.

Performance Indicators:

Input: Percentage of valid Child Protection Investigation (CPI) findings referred to family services
Input: Percentage of foster care board rate available for adoption subsidy
Output: Total number of children served in protective day care per month (cumulative)
Outcome: Median length of stay in foster care for children entering care for the first time (in months)
Outcome: Percentage of children reunified in less than 12 months from latest removal
Outcome: Percentage of children of adopted in less than 24 months from latest removal
Input: Number of children available for adoption at June 30
Efficiency: Number of children exiting during the fiscal year

OBJECTIVE B.3: To improve the outcomes of safety, permanency, and well being in each major program area of Child Protection Investigation, Family Services, Foster Care, and Adoption by end of FY 2010.

Strategy B.3.1: Complete development and implement federal Program Improvement Plan (PIP).
Strategy B.3.2: Develop an oversight and tracking system for initial contact to provide feedback on timeliness of investigation initiation.

- Strategy B.3.3: Seek funds and positions to establish the intake program in support of the “No Wrong Door” philosophy and to support implementation of new Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) regulations.
- Strategy B.3.4: Strengthen practice and policy related to the intake process.
- Strategy B.3.5: Explore use of ACCESS Technology to generate reports that provide demographic and geographic data on repeat maltreatment to identify trends and target populations, including identification of disproportionality of placements and in caseload demographics.
- Strategy B.3.6: Expand initial and ongoing assessment of children’s safety in foster care placements.
- Strategy B.3.7: Collaborate with residential facilities to reduce maltreatment in restrictive care.

Performance Indicators:

- Outcome: Percentage of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during the period under review who had another substantiated or indicated report within a 6 month period
- Input: Average number of new case per CPI worker per month
- Outcome: Percentage of interventions completed within 60 days
- Outcome: Percentage of alleged victims seen in child protection investigations
- Outcome: Percentage of alleged victims seen within the assigned response priority in child protection investigations
- Input: Average number of new child protection investigation cases per month
- Input: Average number of validated cases annually
- Outcome: Percentage of children who re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode
- Outcome: Percentage of foster children who were victims of validated child abuse/neglect while in foster care

OBJECTIVE B.4: To maintain accreditation with the Council on Accreditation for Children and Families (COA).

- Strategy B.4.1: Engage in all necessary actions to maintain accreditation such as preparing an application and a self study; participating in on site reviews with Council on Accreditation staff and reviewers.
- Strategy B.4.2: Improve compliance with standards rated by COA staff in 2003 by at least 10% of substantial compliance ratings evaluated to full compliance.
- Strategy B.4.3: Improve compliance by the Continuous Quality Improvement Team adopting selected standards and consideration of all appropriate measures to make stated improvements.

Performance Indicators:

Input: Number of standards necessary to maintain accreditation.
Outcome: Number of standards met during COA Re-accreditation review

GOAL: We will utilize innovative evidence-based strategic approaches to fulfill the DSS mission. (DSS Goal III)

OBJECTIVE B.5: To continue to provide quality services to children, parents and families through local public, non-profit, and "grass-roots" efforts in child abuse and neglect prevention throughout the state.

Strategy B.5.1: Award grants for development and implementation of new and expanded initiatives in child abuse and neglect prevention including children's safety, parent education, family enrichment, professional training and public awareness programs by June 30, 2010.

Strategy B.5.2: Provide regional meetings around the state for purposes of continued public education on the problem of child abuse and neglect, increasing public awareness on child abuse and neglect prevention efforts, and identifying local and regional priorities for development every three years of the State Plan for Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect.

Performance Indicators:

Input: Amount allocated to grants
Input: Number of grants awarded
Outcome: Total number of educational or support services provided in child abuse and neglect prevention

C. COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

The Community Based Services program is directed at enhancing the quality of life of vulnerable individuals through the provision of contracted services designed to ameliorate the effects of age, poverty, physical or socially handicapping conditions; to secure 100 % available federal funding to support community based social services as well as child abuse and neglect prevention by providing staffing levels adequate to annually develop grant applications, and to implement planning and reporting activities for grants to meet federal requirements on a timely basis; and to ensure the availability of and the quality of services statewide by providing adequate staffing levels to maintain an in-house capability to develop and monitor contracts and provide technical assistance to providers.

- GOAL: We will provide quality service to customers. (DSS Goal II)
- OBJECTIVE C.1: To make services available to 500 persons of refugee status and foster job placements in targeted areas of need where individuals experience dependency and isolation from the community as a result of refugee status by June 30, 2010.
- Strategy C.1.1: Provide funds through purchase of service agreements with social service organizations in geographical areas with high concentrations of refugees and entrants to the refugee or entrant and to promote their economic self-sufficiency.
- Strategy C.1.2: Explore use of geo mapping technology to map refugees with community service providers.

Performance Indicators:

- Output: Number of Persons Served
- Outcome: Number of Job Placements
- Outcome: Provide refugee assistance and job incentive bonuses to eligible persons

- OBJECTIVE C.2: To provide funding and support to 88 programs addressing the needs of our homeless for the purpose of increasing the availability of shelters, services for the homeless, and services for preventing homelessness by June 30, 2010.
- Strategy C.2.1: Distribute funds from the Federal Emergency Shelter Grant Program through contracts with selected parish or local governments for the purpose of increasing the availability of shelters and services for the homeless and services for preventing homelessness.
- Strategy C.2.1: Explore use of geo mapping technology to map homeless populations with community service providers.

Performance Indicators:

- Input: Total amount allocated to homeless programs
- Outcome: Number of shelters provided funds

D. ADMINISTRATION AND EXECUTIVE SUPPORT

The Administration and Executive Support Program develops and implements an array of administrative and supportive services that effectively support the staff and services rendered within the Office of Community Services.

- GOAL: We will maximize resources by operating the department in an effective and efficient manner to achieve quality services. (DSS Goal IV)
- OBJECTIVE D.1: To retain at least 85% of staff on an annual basis who meet the performance requirements for their job (i.e., receive a PPR evaluation of 3 or higher) through June 30, 2010.
- Strategy D.1.1: Obtain input from staff regarding their needs and develop and implement plan to increase job satisfaction through adequate provision of supports and service delivery mechanisms to achieve job expectations.
- Strategy D.1.2: Establish “roving staff” positions consisting of regional staff positions capable of being assigned temporarily to vacancies within the region until recruitment and hiring occurs.
- Strategy D.1.3: Develop and implement available resources for worker safety when providing services such as transportation for behaviorally at risk children.
- Strategy D.1.4: Annually evaluate the utilization of staff.
- Strategy D.1.5: Develop orientation tape depicting “real world” of Child Welfare services to be used on new job candidates prior to interview/hire.
- Strategy D.1.6: Develop plan for gathering and analyzing exit interview information.
- Strategy D.1.7: Train supervisors in staff selection techniques and best practices.
- Strategy D.1.8: Develop and implement a standardized interview questionnaire and rating system to aid supervisors with an effective selection instrument aimed at identifying the best skilled and suitable candidates.

Performance Indicators:

- Input: Baseline resource allocation (budget and staff)
- Outcome: Staff turnover rate
- Quality: Percentage of OCS employees receiving work reviews of overall three or higher

OBJECTIVE D.2: To provide for succession planning for retirees or employees who otherwise terminate employment to achieve 100% replacement of employees in a timely manner through June 30, 2010.

Strategy D.2.1: Develop and implement a cross utilization plan to increase knowledge and experience in each major program area by rotating staff on a cyclical basis with consideration given to minimizing impact on clients.

Strategy D.2.2: Provide internships in identified leadership positions for 30 days at a time to expand staff management competencies through mentoring.

Strategy D.2.3: Incorporate into staff Performance Planning and Review (PPR) evaluations a staff development plan for all employees with focus on maximizing the performance potential and identifying leadership potential.

Strategy D.2.4: Ensure that all OCS employees receive a performance review annually.

Performance Indicators:

Input: Baseline resource allocation (budget and staff)

Input: Number of OCS employees receiving work reviews

Quality: Percentage of compliance with Civil Service rules

OBJECTIVE D.3: To create and implement an efficient and effective casework process that will increase by 5% or more, field staff client intervention time by June 30, 2010.

Strategy D.3.1: Collect recommendations from field staff on paperwork reduction and implement improvements.

Strategy D.3.2: Revise policies and procedures and present to Information Technology as changes are made.

Strategy D.3.3: Train staff and implement new procedures.

Strategy D.3.4: Evaluate process and make improvements as needed.

Performance Indicators:

Efficiency: Reduce deficiencies due to lack of case record documentation

OBJECTIVE D.4: To develop a system that will improve the overall management and administration of resources and provide adequate human resources to support management staff by 2008 and evaluated by 2010.

- Strategy D.4.1: Plan, develop and implement an array of administrative and support services that effectively support OCS staff in service delivery.
- Strategy D.4.2: Improve the overall management and administration of the agency's resources through increased access to accurate and meaningful information by managers and case managers.
- Strategy D.4.3: Provide human resource services support to statewide management staff consistent with the Department of Civil Service Rules/Regulations with guidance on correct classification, employee rights, and disciplinary information and procedures.
- Strategy D.4.4: Ensure that all OCS employees receive a performance review annually.

Performance Indicators:

- Input: Baseline resource allocation (budget and staff)
- Output: Number of contract cost reports processed
- Efficiency: Percentage of cost reports processed within 3-5 days of receipt

APPENDIX A

PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION FOR OCS

R.S 36:477 C. (1); R.S. 36:478 F

PRINCIPLE CLIENTS AND USERS OF EACH PROGRAM AND THE BENEFIT DERIVED BY SUCH PERSONS.

Child Abuse Prevention

Children are the primary beneficiaries as they are first and foremost to be protected from abuse and neglect from their caretakers. All citizens of the state benefit as primary prevention activities would be directed towards children and families to deter the need for direct services from the child welfare agency

Child Welfare Services

Children and their families who directly receive services from the agency are the primary beneficiaries. Through the provision of high quality of services, children will be able to grow and develop to their fullest potential within their biological families, if possible, or when the family of origin is unable to safely provide for children, alternative families are sought for children. Biological parents and family members benefit from supportive services to empower families to care for their children. Adults who volunteer to foster parent or adopt children benefit from sharing their homes with children in terms of enriched lives and satisfaction from knowing they made a difference in the lives of children.

Community providers benefits as the agency uses community resources in social services and/or children's services such as attorneys, courts, medical/hospitals and mental health service providers, stores who provide merchandise that children need. Also, beneficiaries include those community partners with whom the agency collaborates and coordinates services such as other state agencies, local law enforcement agencies, and the public school system.

Community Based Services

Persons who are homeless and/or refugees are the primary beneficiary of grant funding for shelters and/or employment assistance. The community programs that receive the grant funds to provide services employ staff who also benefit through their employment. The citizens of the state are beneficiaries when shelter and/or employment assistance is provided to those most in need. Provision of these services allows an opportunity for persons who are homeless or refugees to be protected and to become self-supporting. The services provided by these programs assist other agencies such as law enforcement

that might have to commit scarce resources to intervene with persons who would otherwise be law-abiding individuals.

Executive and Administrative Support

Children and families will benefit by the supportive management and organization that attends to the staff needs to assure that there is a stable and experienced workforce to deliver child welfare services in a client oriented manner with an efficient workflow process. Staff will benefit through supportive management efforts to streamline paperwork to allow more time for client interventions, a sufficient workforce capacity to balance the workload, and to prevent “staff burnout”. All Louisiana citizens benefit from the quality and efficiency of service delivery that has been identified as the goal of the agency to be accountable for the use funds provided by taxpayers. The achievement of service outcomes that preserve families and nurture children to become healthy, self-sufficient adults who are responsible citizens is in the best interest of all citizens.